

# The Biograph Girl - William J. Mann

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Grab your seat for a wild roller-coaster ride through the 20th century, led by a sassy, chain-smoking 107-year-old actress named Florence Lawrence. Masterfully blending fact with fiction, award-winning author William J. Mann has reimagined this very real historical figure. From her vaudeville childhood as "Baby Flo, The Child Wonder Whistler" to the snowy Bronx backlot where she shot her first motion picture, the lovely Florence commanded--and demanded--attention. By 1910, she was the legendary, enigmatic Biograph Girl, hounded by shrieking fans and blinding flashbulbs--the world's very first movie star. Yet, inevitably, the rabid interest in her faded--far too soon for a girl whose true identity had been lost amidst the glamorous trappings of Hollywood's glowing dawn. Reduced to MGM walk-on roles, a bedraggled, forgotten Lawrence finally ended her life in 1938 with a lethal ingestion of ant paste...or did she? Sixty years later, the fiercely competitive Sheehan twin brothers, Richard and Ben, discover a feisty, mysterious old lady named Flo Bridgewood telling tales of the McKinley assassination and the sinking of the Titanic. The twins share little more in common than identical features and a burning ambition to succeed. Muscular golden boy Richard is a gay journalist with too many credit cards and an unproduced screenplay in his drawer. Rebellious Ben is a notorious womanizer and independent filmmaker whose one success a decade ago was supposed to be his ticket to fame. Neither suspects that a chance meeting is about to launch them into a mystery-shrouded journey that spans not just an entire century, but one woman's remarkable life--and supposed death..."Seamlessly combining actual people with fictional characters, Mann presents a wonderfully entertaining look at the ups and downs of the life of a star and of the film world, from its inception to the present day."--Booklist

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